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*Two Fragments of Hebrew Popular Melodies.*

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ISAIAH iii. 18–23 contains a curious stanza, which, so far as I can ascertain, has been overlooked by all commentators.

והשהרנים	והשביסים	העכסים (1)
והרעלות	והשרות	הנטפות (2)
	והצעדות	הפארים (3)
והלחשים	ובתי נפש	[ו]הקשרים (4)
(?)	ונזמי האף	הטבעות (5)
והמטפחות	והמעטפות	המחלצות (6)
והסרינים	[ו]הגלינים	[ו]החריטים (7)
	והרדידים	[ו]הצינפות (8)

Verses 1, 2, 3, and 6, 7, 8 correspond, with an exact reversal of the order of masculines and feminines. This strophe and epistrophe, if they may be so called, are separated by two verses; 4, containing two masculines separated by a broken phrase, and 5, containing a feminine followed by a broken phrase. It seems not improbable, from a comparison of the remainder of the stanza, that a feminine plural has been lost from the end of verse 5. Considerations of sense make it probable that it was a word meaning ear-rings. I am unable to suggest a word to fill the gap, a fact which will surprise no one who observes the number of ἄπαξ λεγόμενα in the stanza. At the beginning of verses 4, 7, and 8 the conjunction ׀ should evidently be omitted. On the other hand, in the seventh verse ׀ should be inserted before הַגְּלִינִים. The analogy of all the other words in the last two verses shows that we must point this latter word ׀הַגְּלִינִים, and not הַגְּלִינִים, as in the Massoretic text. This involves the translation, “thin silken tissues” (Delitzsch suggests the derivation from גָּלַה, to reveal; garments that reveal rather than cover), which seems to be the translation of the LXX; while the Targum of Jonathan translates by “mirrors.” The former translation seems to me to harmonize better with the context. I should translate the whole stanza thus:—

Anklets, and headbands, and crescents ;  
 Pendants, and bracelets, and fans ;  
 Diadems, and stepping-chains :

Girdles, and scent-bottles, and amulets ;  
 Rings, and nose-rings (and ear-rings) :

Gala-robcs, and tunics, and shawls ;  
 Purses, and silk-gauze, and shirts ;  
 Turbans, and veils.

It will be observed that, to a considerable extent, the words are arranged with reference to resemblance in sense as well as sound. Especially is this so in the epistrophe, where, after making the change above suggested, we have exclusively articles made of stuffs of some description, as over against metal objects. The *ἀπαξ λεγόμενον* **רַעְלוֹת**, at the close of the second verse, is ordinarily interpreted “veils,” the meaning of the root being, apparently, “to stagger.” But veils are entirely out of place in connection with pendants and bracelets. The translation “fans” suits the root-meaning at least as well as “veils,” and is better adapted to the context. Another meaning which has been suggested is “sunshades.” Schöder’s suggestion of **שְׁמִימִים**, “suns,” for **שְׁבִימִים** in the first verse is enticing on account of the “crescents” which follow. In the seventh verse the **נְלִינִים** would seem to be kerchiefs or the like, of a transparent, filmy tissue, while the **סְרִינִים** are shirts of fine linen.

This whole stanza is, as it were, imbedded in a context radically different in metre. To me the conclusion seems natural that it is a quotation, perhaps from a popular song satirizing female dress.

Similarly the lyrical snatch contained in the beginning of the fifth chapter of Isaiah, seems to be a fragment of some popular vintage song, which the prophet has used as the text of a sermon in the form of a poetic parable, delivered or published probably at the vintage season, like the ninth chapter of Hosea. As pointed in the Massoretic text, the first verse of this chapter reads :—

**אֲשִׁירָה נָא לִידִידִי שִׁירַת דּוֹדִי לְבִרְמּוֹ כָּרֶם  
 הִנֵּה לִידִידִי בְּקֶרֶן בְּרֶשֶׁת׃**

With all due deference I must say that commentators do not seem to have made sense out of this verse. The two different words for beloved have proved a stumbling-block. Who is the “my beloved” to whom the song is addressed? and who is the “my beloved”

whose song the poet sings? and what is the object of the change from **יִידִי** to **יְיִדִי**? (Compare, however, Cheyne's explanation.) Any one reading over the verse as pointed by the Massoretes must also observe, as it seems to me, a fault in the rhythm. **יְיִדִי** ought to have another syllable, in order to correspond to **לִיִּידִי**. If we point **יְיִדִי**, both difficulties, the difficulty of sense and the difficulty of sound are removed. The verse would then mean: "Let me sing to my beloved a David-song of his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on the horn of fatness." Amos vi. 5 reads: "That thrum upon the lyre (like David), instruments of music they devise." The metre shows clearly enough that **בְּדִידִי** is an interpolation, a gloss. It is, however, an early gloss, possibly even a gloss of the first editor of the book; and I have felt justified in citing the passage as illustrative of Isaiah vi. 1. Beyond this I can only refer in general to David's great fame as a popular poet in support of my proposed translation, so far as the use of David's name is concerned. Grammatically I suppose there is no need of justifying the form or construction of **יְיִדִי**. I believe, however, that there is further indirect evidence in support of the proposed change in another part of the verse. Canticles vii. 11 bears a rather striking resemblance to the second half of this verse.

### כָּרַם הָיָה לְשִׁלְמָה בְּבַעַל הַמֶּזֶן.

But in 2 Samuel xii. 25 Solomon is called **יִידִידִיָּה**. I would suggest, then, that we have in Isaiah v. 1 a fragment of a popular vintage song, containing a punning allusion to both David and his psalms and Solomon and his vineyard, which had been immortalized in Canticles.

This attempt to find fragments of popular poetry in the Bible is not new. The headings of several psalms, notably xlv. and lxxx., indicate the abundant existence of such poetry. Canticles ii. 15 is, I believe, generally regarded as a snatch from a vintage song, serving as a stage direction of what was there to be sung. Canticles iv. 8 seems to me another specimen of the same sort. In Amos iv. 4, 5 we have possibly another fragment, the prophet having parodied the beginning of a popular religious melody, or pilgrim song, thus:—

Come to Beth-el — and transgress,  
At Gilgal multiply — transgressions, etc.